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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1961

New Man at CIA

The selection of John A. McCone to take over as director of the Central Intelligence Agency must reflect a desire on the President's part to fill a post of very great importance with the best available man. By no stretch of the imagination can any trace of partisan politics be read into this appointment.

It does not follow that all misgivings respecting the departure of Allen Dulles now will fade away. For the snipers began to train their fire on him immediately after the collapse of the Cuban adventure, and it may be that they have finally brought down their man. Without access to all of the details of the part played by Mr. Dulles and the CIA in the Cuban affair, however, it is impossible to form a worthwhile judgment on this point. If Mr. Dulles has not made something of a scapegoat, the fact no doubt will be established sooner or later. Meanwhile, it should be noted that no such suggestion appeared in the exchange this week between the President and Mr. Dulles. Kennedy was warm in his praise of Dulles, and he implied that the Major was leaving only because

he agreed to continue in service. If Mr. Dulles' response was on the noncommittal side, he at least had no complaint to offer. At any rate, the amenities were served and that may have been the best note on which to sign off, at least until this whole story becomes known.

Mr. McCone is a Republican and was a supporter of Mr. Nixon in last year's campaign. One may be confident that he accepted the CIA assignment only in the expectation that politics would play no part in his delicate and difficult new assignment. He brings to the task a rich experience in private industry and in Government, including his outstanding performance as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission under President Eisenhower. Of course, he lacks the experience in intelligence work that Mr. Dulles had, and this, at least at the outset, will be a handicap. But Mr. McCone's record inspires confidence that he will soon have a firm grasp on his new responsibilities.